NPS Form 10-900
(3-82)

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Exp. 10-31-84

**United States Department of the Interior**
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form



See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name



historic Conway Building

and/or common Chicago Title and Trust Building

## 2. Location

street & number 111 West Washington Street ___ not for publication

city, town Chicago ___ vicinity of

state Illinois code 012 county Cook code 031

## 3. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ___ district | ___ public | _X_ occupied | ___ agriculture | ___ museum |
| _X_ building(s) | _X_ private | ___ unoccupied | _X_ commercial | ___ park |
| ___ structure | ___ both | ___ work in progress | ___ educational | ___ private residence |
| ___ site | **Public Acquisition** | **Accessible** | ___ entertainment | ___ religious |
| ___ object | ___ in process | ___ yes: restricted | ___ government | ___ scientific |
| | ___ being considered | _X_ yes: unrestricted | ___ industrial | ___ transportation |
| | | ___ no | ___ military | ___ other: |

## 4. Owner of Property

name 111 West Washington St. Assoc., Ltd. c/o Arthur Rubloff & Co.

street & number 69 West Washington Street

city, town Chicago ___ vicinity of state Illinois

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Cook County Recorder of Deeds

street & number 118 North Clark

city, town Chicago state Illinois

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Illinois Historic Structures Survey-Chicago Loop has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes _X_ no

date 1974 ___ federal _X_ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records ILDept.of Conservation-Historic Sites Division

city, town Springfield state IL

# 7. Description

| Condition | | Check one | Check one |
|---|---|---|---|
| ___ excellent | ___ deteriorated | ___ unaltered | _X_ original site |
| _X_ good | ___ ruins | _X_ altered | ___ moved date _____ |
| ___ fair | ___ unexposed | | |

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The Chicago Title and Trust Building, formerly known as the Conway Building, on the southwest corner of Clark and Washington in the Chicago Loop, is a twenty-one story building with shops on the first floor and offices above. It is essentially square in plan with ten bays extending 187' on Clark and eleven bays extending 197' on Washington. It is organized around a 76' X 76' light well which originally went from the third to the twenty-first floor. The light well was infilled from the third to the sixth floor during extensive remodeling in 1945-1947. The light well, faced with white terra cotta and white enameled brick provides light and ventilation to the shallow office spaces arranged on the inner side of the continuous corridors which are found on the office floors.

The building is steel frame and clay tile arch construction, supported on 104 concrete caissons, 7' in diameter, which are carried 110' to bedrock.

The main entrance in the center of the north facade on Washington Street was originally a recessed three-bay niche flanked by piers with two inner granite columns rising three floors to create a monumental entry loggia. In Holabird & Root's remodeling in 1945-1947, the second and third floors were pushed out to the line of the columns, destroying the loggia arrangement. The present Owner is removing a large portion of these floor extensions, recreating the original recessed niche, and freeing the granite columns from the inner loggia wall. This north entrance leads into a deep vestibule which serves the north elevator bank. The space of the vestibule originally continued into a two-story rotunda corresponding to the square light well. The rotunda was covered with a skylight which provided natural light to shops on the interior of the first floor and offices on the second which opened into the rotunda space. This rotunda also provided access through the ground floor from the north entrance, vestibule, and elevator bank to the south elevator bank. These interior spaces were sheathed in ornamented white terra cotta which has been removed and covered with black and white marble slabs in some areas, particularly in the north vestibule.

The skylight was covered from below in 1936-1937 for fire protection. In the late 1940's remodeling, the skylight was removed altogether,and second and third floors were built into the rotunda space as part of the infilling of the light well to the sixth floor to provide more office space for the new tenant-owner, the Chicago Title and Trust Company. The present Owner is removing a large portion of the second floor, as the infill structure permits, to open up the interior space of the rotunda to a two-story height. This recreated rotunda will be artificially lighted to simulate the original natural lighting through the skylight. The recreated rotunda will allow circulation again from the north entrance through the building to the south elevator lobby as existed in the original plan. The original arrangement of subsidiary entrances from Clark Street in the southeast corner of the building and from Commerce Court on the west remain; however, the original grills over the Clark Street entrance have been filled, and the ornamented white terra cotta of Commerce Court has been covered with metal wall covering.

The exterior remains virtually unchanged from the original building design, except for the removal of the cornice and roof balustrade, as has been done with several important Chicago buildings such as the Reliance, the Marquette, and Carson, Pirie, Scott & Company. The north, east, and west facades are covered with gray-white granite to the level of the fourth floor. The fourth through twenty-first floors are done in granite-finished gray terra cotta which has remained in excellent condition. The terra cotta on these facades is richly ornamented in alternating bands of subtly handled palmette and fleur-de-lis motifs. These horizontal bands continue around all three facades, wrapping from one to the next around the uniquely rounded corners of the building. These bands provide equal horizontal weight to the strong verticals of the paired double hung windows of floors four through twenty-one and the piers which correspond to the steel frame.

The south alley facade is of unornamented white terra cotta and enameled brick through the seventeenth floor where the ornamented terra cotta of the other facades is taken up for the top four floors.

The facades are divided into the base-shaft-capital configuration typical of tall office buildings in the late nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth. The base portion is made up of three stories, articulated by simple piers marking the bay arrangement of the structural system. This level is topped with a strongly projecting entabulature, breaking only slightly at the corners in a shallow return before wrapping around the curved corners. The ornamented panels framing the windows of the first three floors are simple in their geometricized decoration, reflecting the more difficult carving techniques of working in granite. The change to terra cotta occurs at the fourth story, where the relative ease of the clay-working techniques of terra cotta production is seen in the exuberance of ornamentation from the fourth through the twenty-first floors. The fourth floor decoration is composed of grimacing faces flanking the rounded corners, and alternating fleur-de-lis panels and female faces surrounded by foliage.

The shaft of the building configuration is seen in the twelve floors from five to seventeen. These floors are subdivided into four units of three floors each by means of decorative bands of enlarged Greek keys above floor seven and thirteen, and enlarged interlace above floor ten. The three-floor units are further ornamented by the alternating palmette and fleur-de-lis bands; the sills of all the windows correspond to a palmette band, and all lintels to fleur-de-lis bands. Above the sixteenth floor an enlarged garland marks the transition to a single floor which corresponds to the column necking.On this single floor, the rounded corners are flanked by projecting lion heads; the walls of the vertical piers have faces which alternate with decorative panels between the separated double hung windows.

Floors eighteen through twenty-one form the capital unit. The simplicity of the three-story piers which frame the recessed window areas contrasts dramatically with the Baroque quality of the corner treatments, while also referring back to the three-story piers of the base unit. Two columns flank the balcony-like spaces on the corners of floors eighteen, nineteen, and twenty. These balconies are decorated with shields and cartouches; the three dimensionality of these elements is accentuated by the deep recession of the balcony niches into the building mass at the rounded corners.

The separated double hung windows of the twenty-first floor remain compositionally paired by the alternation of rosetta panels and plain wall surfaces. The building originally terminated in a heavy dentil course topped by a monumental balustrade.

The truly unique feature of the building is the handling of the corners as slightly projecting curves from the planes of the adjoining facades. The curves accent the sense of a column shaft and soften the profile of the building in relation to neighboring tall buildings. The rounded corners of the Chicago Title and Trust/Conway Building soften the vertical transitions on and around it in a manner similar to the softening of the horizontal transition from building plane to cornice in the use of the round windows on the top floor of Burnham's earlier Railway Exchange (Condit, The Chicago School of Architecture, p. 113).

# 8. Significance

| Period | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ___ prehistoric | ___ archeology-prehistoric | ___ community planning | ___ landscape architecture | ___ religion | |
| ___ 1400–1499 | ___ archeology-historic | ___ conservation | ___ law | ___ science | |
| ___ 1500–1599 | ___ agriculture | X economics | ___ literature | ___ sculpture | |
| ___ 1600–1699 | X architecture | ___ education | ___ military | ___ social/ humanitarian | |
| ___ 1700–1799 | ___ art | ___ engineering | ___ music | ___ theater | |
| ___ 1800–1899 | X commerce | ___ exploration/settlement | ___ philosophy | ___ transportation | |
| X 1900– | ___ communications | ___ industry | ___ politics/government | ___ other (specify) | |
| | | ___ invention | | | |

**Specific dates** 1912-1915 **Builder/Architect** D.H. Burnham & Company/Graham, Burnham & Company

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Chicago Title and Trust/Conway Building is a unique example of an early twentieth-century tall office building designed by D.H. Burnham & Company in early 1912, and constructed by Graham, Burnham & Company between 1912 and 1915. The building is especially significant as the last building to come from Burnham's designers before Burnham's death on June 1, 1912, in Heidelberg. The designation as Burnham's last building has usually been reserved for the Continental and Commercial Bank Building at 208 South LaSalle in Chicago;[1] however, Burnham's own letters indicate that the bank building had gone through the design stage into working drawings and specifications, and contracts had been awarded before Burnham left Chicago for the last time in April, 1912.[2] The drawings for the Chicago Title and Trust/Conway Building were signed by Ernest Graham, Peirce Anderson, and Edward Probst on April 30, 1912, almost two months after the Continental and Commercial Bank Building drawings were completed.

The site of the Conway Building had been occupied by several important Chicago institutions before the present building was constructed. The First Presbyterian Church, one of Chicago's earliest organizations, was built on the site in 1844. When the congregation outgrew this building, it was sold to Philip Peck, a local businessman whose family owned the property until 1911. Peck rented the former church to the Mechanics Institute, an important cultural and educational facility up to the Civil War. In 1861, the Smith & Nixon Music Hall was built on the site; it was destroyed in the 1871 Fire. Temporary buildings were erected until 1884-1885, when the Chicago Opera House, designed by Cobb & Frost and perhaps an early example of steel frame construction, was built. This building was demolished in 1912, to make way for the Conway Building.

The client for the Conway Building was one of the most important, if not the most important real estate speculator in Chicago between 1910 and the early 1940's: the Estate of Marshall Field. Field had been born in Conway, Massachusetts, in 1834, and had come to Chicago in 1856, where he rose from being a $400-a-year clerk to a partner in the largest dry-goods business in the city within eight years. When Field died in January, 1906, his estate was valued at over $83,000,000; his will called for the funds to be invested, particularly in Chicago real estate, until 1943, when all funds were to be transferred to his grandson, Marshall Field III, on his fiftieth birthday.[3] Most of the Estate's acquisitions were purchases of existing buildings, but it did undertake three major construction projects: the Conway Building (1912-1915), the Pittsfield Building (1927), and the Field Building (1931-1934), presently known as the LaSalle Bank Building.

D.H. Burnham & Company had handled several projects for Marshall Field & Company, beginning with the store annex in 1892, and involving stores, annexes, and warehouses for the merchandising company. The Field Museum project, which began around 1900, but did not start construction until 1915, after Burnham's death, was a D.H. Burnham & Company design carried through by its successor firm, Graham, Burnham & Company.

It is significant to note that even after Burnham's death, the Estate of Marshall Field continued its patronage of Graham, Burnham & Company in the Field Museum project, and of that firm's successor, Graham, Anderson, Probst & White after its formation in 1917, in the Pittsfield, Field Building, Marshall Field Garden Apartments (1927-1930), and Merchandise Mart (1930) projects.

Burnham's first partner, John Root, had died in 1891, on the eve of the planning of the World's Columbian Exposition. Burnham immersed himself in the fair project, coming in close contact with some of the leading East Coast architects of the time, particularly the firm of McKim, Mead & White, which prompted a shift in Burnham's career away from the Chicago School aesthetic to a more classicizing, Beaux-Arts approach to design.[4] After the fair, Burnham took Charles Atwood, who had designed the Palace of Fine Arts (presently the Museum of Science and Industry) for the fair, as his partner. Atwood designed the Reliance Building in 1894, while working with Burnham. This building seemed to establish a new direction in Chicago architecture, but Atwood was dismissed from Burnham's firm after two years and died soon after. Burnham's new junior partner was Ernest Graham, one of Burnham's assistants on the fair project. After 1898, Graham was Burnham's chief partner.

In 1900, the inclusion of Peirce Anderson in the firm strengthened the Beaux-Arts tendencies of Burnham. Anderson was extremely well-educated in this country and had spent six years in Paris studying at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts on Burnham's suggestion. In 1908, the firm of D.H. Burnham & Company was re-organized with Graham in the position of general manager, Anderson in charge of design, Probst in charge of working drawings, and Howard White heading project supervision. In 1910, Burnham's two sons, Hubert and Daniel, Jr., joined the firm. From 1902 until 1910, Burnham himself was actively engaged in city planning projects in Washington, Cleveland, San Francisco, Manila, and Chicago. After 1910, he entered semi-retirement. As a result of this combination of circumstances, designs which came from Burnham's firm after the initiation of the Chicago Plan project in 1906, were no doubt more the work of Graham and Anderson than Burnham. Burnham did keep a close watch on the firm and its projects, and any designs which came from it until his death must be credited to him.[5]

The Conway Building highlights the difficulty in attributing some of the late D.H. Burnham & Company projects to Graham, Burnham & Company. Two sales brochures for the building identify the architect differently; the 1912 brochure names D.H. Burnham & Company as the architect, and the 1915 one names Graham, Burnham & Company. The building is clearly transitional in the histories of the two firms.

The Burnham building most like the Conway Building is the New York City Landmark (named in 1966), the Flatiron Building (1901-1903). The compositions of the Flatiron and the Conway, both twenty-one stories and ornamented with lavish Beaux-Arts details, are both distinguished by the unusual rounded corner treatments. In the Flatiron, there was a functional reason for rounding the sharp corner angles produced by the triangular site;Burnham's design rounded all three corners. However, the square plan of the Conway Building did not require four rounded corners. This unique treatment is clearly derived from Burnham's Baroque aesthetic, perhaps even being modeled after Roman Baroque buildings such as Borromini's Palazzo di Propaganda Fide, which Burnham could have known from his visits to Rome. The rounded corners of the Conway Building break the straight facade line of blocks of tall buildings, a necessary design element considering the seemingly endless boulevards of Burnham's 1909 Chicago Plan. The rounded corners introduce a new aesthetic possibility into the urban landscape, and are particularly significant being found on the last building to come from the office of the great city planner, D.H. Burnham.

Notes

1 A.N. Rebori, "The Work of Burnham & Root, D.H. Burnham, D.H. Burnham & Co., and Graham, Burnham & Co.," Architectural Record, 38, July, 1915, p. 166; Carl W. Condit, Chicago, 1910-1929, Building, Planning, and Urban Technology, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1973, p. 94. Thomas Hines, Burnham of of Chicago, Architect and Planner, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1979, Appendix A, p. 383, dates the Continental and Commercial Bank Building and the Conway Building to 1914, as designed before, but completed after Burnham's death in 1912.

The emphasis on the Continental and Commercial Bank Building as Burnham's last building is no doubt derived from Burnham's involvement in the bank project as one of the bank's directors. Many of his letters from early 1912 were recommendations from Burnham to his friends of the bank's services. Burnham's resignation from the American Institute of Architects was prompted in part by Burnham's disagreement with the AIA over rules governing the competition for the bank building project.

2 Letters of Daniel H. Burnham, Burnham Library, The Art Institute of Chicago:
July 21, 1911 to J.R. Chapman, Vice-President of the Continental and Commercial Bank, predicting that the new bank building would be completed by May, 1914, perhaps as early as December, 1913;
January 22, 1912 to G.M. Reynolds, giving a completion date for drawings and specifications on the bank building as February 1, 1912;
March 14, 1912 to Albert B. Wells, anticipating the awarding of contracts for the bank building between March 25, and April 2, 1912.

3 "The Estate of Marshall Field Is Completing Its Largest Project," Architectural Forum, 59, December, 1933, pp. 508-511; Joseph Medill Patterson, Confessions of A Drone, Charles H. Kerr & Company, Chicago, 1906, pp. 1-6 passim; Patterson, "Marshall Field's Will," Collier's Magazine, June 2, 1906, pp. 24-26' "Story of Marshall Field's Will," Chicago Daily News, September 11, 1943.

4 Hines, Burnham of Chicago, pp. 73-124; Ann Lorenz Van Zanten, "The Marshall Field Annex and the New Urban Order of Daniel Burnham's Chicago," Chicago History, XL/3, Fall-Winter, 1982, pp. 130-141.

5 Hines, Burnham of Chicago, pp. 346-348, p. 357; Charles Moore, Daniel Hudson Burnham, Architect, Planner of Cities, Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, 1921, Vol. II, p. 147.

Many of Burnham's letters from 1911 and 1912 are refusals to requests for speeches and committee memberships.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____ Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References

| | Zone | Easting | Northing | | Zone | Easting | Northing |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | | | | B | | | |
| C | | | | D | | | |
| E | | | | F | | | |
| G | | | | H | | | |

**Verbal boundary description and justification**

Lots 1,2,3 of Block 56 of the Original Town of Chicago in the S.E. 1/4 of Section 9-39-14 platted by the Canal Commissioners, August 4, 1830

**List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries**

| state | code | county | code |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| state | code | county | code |
| | | | |

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Hubbard & Hubbard, Inc. for Jack Train Associates

organization _____ date October, 1983

street & number H&H: 1215 Washington, Suite 210 telephone 312-256-7897
JTA: 35 East Wacker Dr., Suite 2600 312-332-0363

city or town H&H: Wilmette state Illinois 60091
JTA: Chicago Illinois 60601

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

___ national ___ state ___ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

title _____ date _____

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date _____

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date _____

Chief of Registration

The Architectural Work of Graham, Anderson, Probst & White, Chicago, and Their Predecessors, D.H. Burnham & Co. and Graham, Burnham & Co., 2 vol., B.T. Batsford Ltd., London, 1933.

Condit, Carl W., Chicago, 1910-1929, Building, Planning, and Urban Technology, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1973.

_____, The Chicago School of Architecture, A History of Commercial and Public Building in the Chicago Area, 1875-1925, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1964.

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Field Estate Letters, Marshall Field & Company/Field Enterprises Archives, Chicago.

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Van Zanten, Ann Lorenz, "The Marshall Field Annex and the New Urban Order of Daniel Burnham's Chicago," Chicago History, XL/3, Fall-Winter, 1982, pp. 130-141.

Wendt, Lloyd, and Kogan, Herman, Give the Lady What She Wants!, The Story of Marshall Field & Company, Rand McNally & Company, Chicago, 1952.

Wight, Peter B., "Daniel Hudson Burnham and His Associates," Architectural Record, 38, July, 1915, pp. 1-12.

Will of Marshall Field, Marshall Field & Company/Field Enterprises Archives, Chicago.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property LESS THAN 1

Quadrangle name CHICAGO LOOP  Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

| | Zone | Easting | Northing |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | 16 | 447620 | 4636740 |
| B | | | |
| C | | | |
| D | | | |
| E | | | |
| F | | | |
| G | | | |
| H | | | |

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**List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| state N/A | code | county | code |
| state | code | county | code |

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Hubbard & Hubbard, Inc. for Jack Train Associates

organization  date October, 1983

street & number H&H: 1215 Washington, Suite 210  telephone 312-256-7897
JTA: 35 East Wacker Dr., Suite 2600  312-332-0363

city or town H&H: Wilmette  state Illinois 60091
JTA: Chicago  Illinois 60601

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

___ national  X state  ___ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Director  date 12/30/83

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:  date

Chief of Registration